

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 22777

NESCO

EO 11652:GDS
TAGS: UNESCO, AORG, PORG
SUBJECT: UNESCO:DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE MASS MEDIA

REF: (A) STATE 154969 (B) STATE 180035

1. WIDE RANGING CONTACTS WITH SECRETARIAT DURING PAST SEVERAL WEEKS HAVE ENABLED PERMDEL TO CONSTRUCT FOLLOWING PICTURE OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE HAPPENING WITH RESPECT TO A DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE MASS MEDIA.
2. BEST INFORMATION FROM DDG FOBES THROUGH SECRETARIAT WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALS IS THAT A DRAFT TEXT HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND SENT TO THE DG FOR HIS COMMENT. HTOOE FEW WHO HAVE SEEN IT SAY THAT THE DRAFT TEXT RESEMBLES EARLIER DRAFT, WITH MAJOR REVISIONS COMING IN ARTICLES 10 AND 12, AND STICKS MOSTLY TO LOFTY ETHICAL PRINCIPLES, RENDERING IT "INNOCUOUS TO THE POINT OF STERILITY" THUS, THE DRAFT TEXT WOULD APPEAR TO FALL UNDER SCENARIO B, REFTTEL

A. NONE OF OUR CONTACTS WOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER POSTPONEMENT UNTIL 1980 AS A REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE, AND IF WHAT IS SAID ABOUT THE TEXT IS TRUE, NEITHER
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WOULD PERMDEL. TWO SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS, NAESSELUND (DENMARK) AND KETTANI (MOROCCO) HAVE WORKED ON THE TEXT, ALONG WITH THREE CONSULTANTS, WHO COMPLETED THE WORKING PARTY: CLEMENT JONES (UK, BRITISH MEDIA COUNCIL), MR. NORDENSTRENG (FINNISH), AND CARNERO ROQUE (PERU, UNESCO REGIONAL MEDIA ADVISOR FOR SOUTH AMERICA.)

3.SOURCES BELIEVE THAT AMPLE TIME REMAINS TO PRODUCE A CONSENSUS TEXT BEFORE 29 TH GEN CONF. BEST INFORMATION IS THAT AS SOON AS DG CLEARS DRAFT TEXT, THIS WILL BE TAKEN UP WITH "SELECTED"GOVERNEMENTS AND MEDIA GROUPS AND PROFESSIONALS BEFORE THE END OF 1977. WE ARE INFORMED THAT 34,000 DOLLARS HAS JUST BEEN ASSEMBLED TO BEGIN THIS PROCESS. IMPLICATION IS THAT USSR AND US WILL BE INCLUDED IN THESE "PRELIMINARY"AND INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS WITH "SELECTED"GOVERNMENTS,AND THAT MEDIA PROFESSIONALS WILL BE CONTACTED AS WELL. US NATCOM, WE HAVE LEARNED MIGHT BE ASKED TO COORDINATE THIS EFFORT, ALTHOUGH DEPT. SHOULD BE AWARE THAT IS IDEA FLOATED AT "WORKING LEVEL." IT HAS ALSO BEEN HINTED THAT MR. NORDENSTRENG WILL CONDUCT CONSULTATIONS WITH USSR.

4. WIDER AND MORE FORMAL CONSULTATIONS WITH A LARGER NUMBER OF UNESCO MEMBERS IS CONTEMPLATED FOLLOWING THESE PRELIMINARY CONTACTS, AND SHOULD BE FINISHED SOMETIME PRIOR TO THE 20TH GENERAL CONFERENCE. THE DG, WE ARE INFORMED BY THE BOTH FOBES AND NAJMAN, IS EXTREMELY SENSITIVE TO THIS ISSUE AND IS PROCEEDING VERY CAREFULLY WITH THE INTENTION TO PUBLISH A DRAFT TEXT ONLY RPT ONLY WHEN CONFIDENTIAL

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THERE IS A CLEAR CONSENSUS ON THE PART OF ALL PARTIES CONCERNED. THE AIM IS TO ARRIVE AT THE 20TH GENERAL CONFERENCE WITH A UNANIMOUS TEXT. BOTH OFFICIALS SAY THAT THEY UNDERSTAND FULLY US CONCERN THAT ADEQUATE TIME BE ALLOWED FOR PROPER CONSULTATIONS, AND HAVE ASKED AT SAME TIME, ON BEHALF OF DG, FOR CONTINUED PATIENCE IN THIS MATTER.

5. IN OUR OPINION, IF PROCEEDINGS CONCERNING DRAFT DECLARATION MOVE ALONG AS DESCRIBED ABOVE, AND ERSTWHILE RECALCITRANTS CAN BE BROUGHT INTO LINE WITH A CONSENSUS TEXT, ISSUE WILL NOT POSE TOO MUCH OF A PROBLEM AT THE 20TH GEN CONF. SINCE IT APPEARS THAT DG'S GOAL IS AN INNOCUOUS TEXT WHICH WILL QUIETLY FULFILL 19TH GENERAL CONFERENCE INSTRUCTIONS, STRATEGY OUTLINED REFTEL (A) PARA 6 TO OBTAIN MAXIMUM PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT THROUGH A FULLY ORCHESTRATED AND HIGHLY VISIBLE CAMPAIGN MIGHT UPSET THE APPLE CART. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE BETTER TO PUT DECLARATION ISSUE QUIETLY TO REST, AND TO THIS END WOULD INVOLVE KEY US MEDIA PEOPLE IN ORDER TO DIFFUSE OPPOSITION TO IDEA OF HAVING A DECLARATION,

SHOWING THEM THROUGH SECRETARIAT'S CONSULTATIONS THAT PROBABLY SUBSTANCE OF TEXT WILL DO NO HARM TO PRINCIPLE OF SEPARATION OF GOVERNMENT AND FREE PRESS. THIS SERVICE WOULD BE OUR CONTRIBUTION TO SMOOTH HANDLING OF DECLARATION ISSUE AT 20TH GENERAL CONFERENCE.

6. ON THE OTHER HAND, SUGGESTION TO MAXIMIZE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN SUBSTANTIVE MEDIA ISSUES WHICH WILL BE HANDLED IN WISEMEN COMMISSION WOULD BE WARMLY WELCOMED BY SECRETARIAT AND MANY MEMBER STATES. IN THIS CONTEXT, PERM DEL WOULD STRONGLY SUPPORT SUCH A METHOD WHICH WOULD STIMULATE AND BOADEN PARTICIPATION.
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7. CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN, HOWEVER, TO MAKE VERY CLEAR THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PROCESSES INVOLVING THE DECLARATION, AND THAT OF THE WISEMEN'S COMMISSION WHICH WILL INVOLVE ITSELF IN SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. THIS WILL BE MADE EASIER BY THE FACT THAT THE WISEMEN COMMISSION WILL BE ASKED TO SUBMIT ONLY A PROGRESS REPORT TO THE 20TH GENERAL CONFERENCE, THUS KEEPING OPEN DISCUSSIONS ON DIVISIVE ISSUES WHICH HAVE OCCURRED UP TO THAT TIME. JUST THE SAME, THE TWO PROCESSES MUST BE KEPT ABSOLUTELY SEPARATE, AS THEY INDEED ARE, IN THE EYES OF THE PUBLIC, IF THE STRATEGY WORKED OUT TO PUT THE DECLARATION QUIETLY TO REST IS TO SUCCEED. PERMDEL WILL, OF COURSE, CONTINUE TO MONITOR PROCESS INVOLVING DRAFT DECLARATION CLOSELY, BUT WOULD BE SURPRISED IF DG WILL MAKE DECISION ON CURRENT TEXT BEFORE RETURNING TO PARIS ON A MORE PERMANENT BASIS IN SEPTEMBER.

8. AS WE HAVE REPORTED SEVERAL TIMES PREVIOUSLY, IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT THE DG WILL VISIT THE US (I.E. WASHINGTON) AGAIN, UNLESS HE IS RECEIVED AT THE WHITE HOUSE. THUS, WHILE HE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE BUSY WITH THE 103EXDB, WHILE THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF COMMUNICATIONS MEETING IS UNDERWAY IN WASHINGTON (PER REFTEL B, PARA 6), THE QUESTION OF A RECEPTION AT THE "HIGHEST LEVELS" WOULD CONTINUE TO BE THE PRINCIPAL FACTOR GOVERNING HIS RESPONSE.
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